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SERIES A

FROM : Amembassy JIDDA

DATE: May 23, 1963

SUBJECT : Joint Weeka No. 20

REF

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY *JeBonne*

DATE 10/13/82

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Drafted by:

RWMurphy/MDraper/RLPhillips:lf 5-21-63

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POLITICAL/ECONOMIC

2. Tour of Jizan and Abha. Tour by Ambassador and party of southwestern Saudi Arabia May 19 included stops at Jizan and Abha which had been targets of air attacks by UAR aircraft January-March this year. Atmosphere of fear still prevalent in both centers. Local sources agreed that there had been no movement across border in Jizan area since late April and by that time some of Yemenis had left Abha, presumably enroute to join Yemeni forces in Yemen. (AMEMB JERUSALEM)

3. Paragon Service Flying School Recommended. Chartered Saudi Airlines DC-8 carrying visiting U.S. Highways Team, Ambassador and other Embassy officers was fired on by Saudi anti-aircraft while enroute Jidda, capital of the Arab world, on morning May 19 but plane was not hit. The pilot dove quickly for safety and requested the Jidda airport authorities explained incident to the local Air Force. The Air Force could not respond due to confusion in area. Later same day the group returned by air to the airport at Jidda. Located at Jidda Highway some 20 miles distant, where they were met by the Saudi Air Force and apologized for incident. Captain of the Saudi Air Force command had mistakenly identified plane as Egyptian. The officer was already jailed for his mistake, something trivial. The Ambassador accepted the apology and urged leniency with officer. Abha had been scene of heavy air attack March 4, which destroyed much of the local hospital. The Ambassador on his return to Jidda wrote to the Minister of Defense urging that no further punishment for the officer concerned be meted out. (AMEMB JERUSALEM)

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5. U.S. Highway Team Visiting Saudi Arabia: The U.S. highway team comprised of Mr. Jack HENRITT, U.S. AID Director in Ceylon, Lawrence HATCHETT, HPR engineer and Howard RIMBY, AID engineer, have been touring Saudi Arabia for nearly two weeks, during which they have had prolonged discussions with Crown Prince FAYSAI, Supreme Planning Board officials, Ministry of Communications personnel and representatives of other concerned ministries, a host of private contracting firms and UN representatives. The team arrived in response to the personal request made by Crown Prince Fayal during negotiations with Ambassador Barker. The Crown Prince asserted he was beset by conflicting advice and needed unprejudiced and disinterested help to assist him in developing a road building program of some 4,800 kilometers. The team has visited many hundreds of kilometers of roads. Their penetrating examination of the problems has already succeeded in stimulating Saudi Government personnel involved with the program to useful decisions. (CONFIDENTIAL)

Comment: It is hoped that the team's recommendations, to be made personally and privately to Crown Prince Fayal, will break the log jam in the highway program and thereby enable give an impetus to the development program as a whole, which has been lagging seriously. (CONFIDENTIAL)

#### MILITARY

USA Financing

There is indication that SAG is giving consideration to means for financing military purchases including FVA aircraft on cash basis although Prince Sultan asserts his Ministry is without funds for acquisition material until beginning new fiscal year. (SECRET)

#### PHOTOLOGICAL

1. Astronaut Cooper: Saudi Radio reported Major Cooper's successful space flight from Western wire services, May 15, 16 and 17. Al Hadath, Al Madinah and Al Fajr carried a total of four pictures and 572 column inches of IPS and various press release material on Cooper flight, including banner headline. (Al Hadath, May 16): "American Astronaut Successfully Completes His Trip: Gordon Cooper Covers 600,000 miles in 28 Revolutions Around the Earth." Central feature of coverage was front-page, 10 lines poem on orbital flight, written by poet Laureate of England, Shaykh Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-Ghannam. Although poem written in praise of Cooper's accomplishment, it stressed Allah's omnipotence in giving one of His own creatures the authority to perform such feats in space. (UNCLASSIFIED)

Comment: While Cooper's flight was of some interest among western educated groups in Riyadh, it was viewed by some of Arab political developments, etc., re: Syria, Iraq and UAR. (UNCLASSIFIED)

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